## Grants to Military-Connected Local Educational Agencies for Academic and Support Programs
### (Short Title: MCASP)

**Discretionary Grant Program, Request for Proposals (RFP) for Fiscal Year 2015**

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 12.556**

**Application Deadline:  Tuesday, May 5, 2015**

## Summary

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), Educational Partnership is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2015 for Grants to Military-Connected Local Educational Agencies for Academic and Support Programs (MCASP). To advance to new levels of excellence, DoDEA engaged in a comprehensive process to revise its Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The plan expands opportunities for ALL military dependent children, and sets a common understanding of our shared mission, vision, and core values, both internally and to our stakeholders. The CSP assists in aligning efforts to support both students in DoDEA schools and students who are in public military-connected school districts.

The DoDEA Partnership Grant Program supports research-based programs to increase student achievement and ease the challenges that military children face due to their parents' military service. The grant program provides resources to military-connected local educational agencies (LEAs) to develop and implement projects that are designed to:

- Enhance and expand instructional supports to help students meet the requirements of rigorous curriculum,
- Provide structures to support the social and emotional needs of military students,
- Increase advanced placement and virtual learning opportunities,
- Improve educator knowledge and skills through professional development,
- Increase opportunities for students to study strategic languages,
- Provide enhanced services for students with disabilities,
- Enhance and integrate technology in the classroom, and
- Engage parents in supporting students' college and career readiness.

DoDEA's partnerships with LEAs are intended to meet the needs of the 1.2 million children from military families who are enrolled in public schools throughout the United States.

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## A. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### INTRODUCTION

The FY 2015 grants to Military-Connected Local Educational Agencies for Academic and Support Programs (MCASP) are 5-year grants that aim to strengthen family-school-community relationships and enhance student achievement for military dependent students. Applicants may choose to design their projects with academic goals, military-connected support goals, or a combination of both. Military dependent student support projects should address the social-emotional needs of military students. All projects should strengthen teacher content knowledge and skills through sustained professional development. Please note, applicants are required to use the first year as a planning year to include activities such as refine project plans, provide professional development, secure necessary resources, and hire or revise staff positions.

Awards will be made to local educational agencies (LEAs) on behalf of their eligible school(s). The LEA must have:

- At least one participating school with **twenty-five percent or greater** military dependent student enrollment.
- At least fifty percent of participating schools have a military dependent student enrollment of **twenty-five percent or above**.
- The remaining percentage of participating schools may have **between ten and twenty-five percent** military dependent student enrollment.

Although funding is related to military dependent student enrollment, it is expected that the proposed programs may serve all students at the target schools. Funding may also target sub-groups of military dependent students such as students with disabilities and English Language learners. LEAs may submit only one application on behalf of its eligible schools.

The following two caveats should be noted:

- The impact on the military dependent student subgroups should be demonstrable and measureable. Districts must be able to disaggregate all outcomes to show military dependent student growth.

- Student support programs must focus primarily on military dependent students and include impacts that are demonstrable and measureable. Districts must be able to disaggregate outcomes for military dependent students.

**Definition of *Military Dependent Student***: The term, *military dependent student*, is defined as an elementary or secondary school student who is (i) a dependent of a member of the Armed Forces; (ii) a dependent of a civilian employee of the Department of Defense; or (iii) a dependent of a person who is not a

member of the Armed Forces or a civilian employee of the Department of Defense but who is employed on Federal property.

**Authorization:** Section 574 (d) of P.L. 109-364, as amended; Title 10 U.S.C. Section 2192(b) and Title 10 U.S.C. Section 2193a

## EXPECTATIONS

This grant program is limited to funding research-based strategies that provide <u>direct services</u> to military dependent students. A list of acceptable strategies is included on p. 15 and 16 of this announcement.

**Research-based strategies:** DoDEA supports research-based programs that aim to increase student achievement; strengthen student and family engagement in school and the community; and foster a positive school climate for military dependent children. Research-based strategies:

- Are not limited to a research-based curriculum, but may be teaching and learning strategies that often cut across all content areas and all grade levels.

- Include both valid and innovative programs.

**Direct services to support military dependent student achievement**: Regarding academic programs, LEAs must employ strategies with demonstrated effectiveness in improving student achievement. Improvement in achievement must be demonstrated through comparisons to a reference point such as state-wide standards and/or normative groups. Strategies to support military dependent student achievement include tutoring programs, in-class support programs, extra-curricular activities and virtual learning programs.

**Direct services to support military dependent students and families:** Support programs must employ strategies that address the social-emotional needs of military dependent students. These projects should demonstrate an increase in the number of military dependent students served. Strategies to increase in the number of military dependent students served include the use of military counselors, peer support groups, parent/community engagement programs and behavior management programs. Grant funds must be used for programs that directly support the student, and cannot be used for programs that only support family/community members.

## FOCUS AREAS AND PRIORITIES

For the FY15 grant program, there are two focus areas, and each applicant must include at least one area in their project design. The grant program may target a sub-group such as military dependent students with disabilities (SWD). There is one competitive preference priority for new applicants. Please note that as part of this funding opportunity, grantees may apply to be a mentor district for additional funds. Applicants may also request a mentor LEA; additional funds will be made available to offset additional costs if a mentor is assigned. Please see Appendix A for additional information.

**Focus Area #1: Academic support for military dependent youth:** Projects include *direct services* to improve in some academic area (English [including ELL], Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies). The intent is to encourage effective approaches using academic curriculum and resources to improve all student outcomes with a focus on military dependent student subgroups. All projects will include professional development to prepare teachers to use the materials and instructional strategies needed to achieve the intended outcome.

**Focus Area #2: Support for military dependent students' social-emotional wellbeing:** Projects include *direct services* to address the challenges and issues that face military dependent students whose families are involved in transitions to new schools and/or deployment. The intent is to encourage effective approaches with staff knowledgeable about military student challenges and concerns. All projects will include professional development to prepare counselors and teachers to understand the challenges and issues that military dependent students face and to meet their needs using materials and support strategies that foster social-emotional wellbeing.

In addition, there is one competitive preference priority:

**Competitive Preference Priority: New applicants:** Applicants may receive **5 additional points** if the LEA has never previously received a DoDEA grant award.

## B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| **Funding Opportunity Title** | Grants to Military-Connected Local Educational Agencies for Academic and Support Programs (MCASP) |
| **Due Date for Applications** | Tuesday, May 5, 2015 |
| **Anticipated Total Available Funding** | $30 Million |
| **Estimated Number of Awards** | 35 |
| **Award Amount Per LEA** | $250,000 - $1,500,000 (See Funding Formula) |
| **Project Period** | Five (5) years |
| **Eligible Applicants** | The LEA must have:<br>  o  At least one participating school with **twenty-five percent or greater** military dependent student enrollment.<br>  o  At least fifty percent of participating schools have a military dependent student enrollment of **twenty-five percent or above**.<br>  o  The remaining percentage of participating schools may have **between ten and twenty-five percent** military dependent student enrollment.<br>The LEA may submit only one application on behalf of its eligible school(s). |
| **Technical Assistance Webinars** | March 10-11, 2015 |
| **Contact Information** | DoDEA Grant Program Office<br>grants@hq.dodea.edu<br>571-372-6026 |

## C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Any local educational agency (LEA) may apply on behalf of its military-connected schools.  To be included in the grant, an LEA must have:

- At least one participating school with **twenty-five percent or greater** military dependent student enrollment.
- At least fifty percent of participating schools have a military dependent student enrollment of **twenty-five percent or above**.
- The remaining percentage of participating schools may have **between ten and twenty-five percent** military dependent student enrollment.

For example, if a district includes five schools in its proposal, at least three of the schools must have a military dependent student population of at least 25 percent or higher. The two remaining schools may have a military dependent student population of between 10 percent and 25 percent. Schools with a military dependent student enrollment of less than ten (10) percent for the 2014-2015 School Year are not eligible to participate in the grant.

The following is an example submission that shows a breakdown of eligible schools and percentages of military dependent students.

| Sunshine School District | | SY 2014 - 1015 | | | Military dependent % of Enrollment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Name of  School | Grade Level | Military | Non-military | TOTAL | Percentage |
| Wesminister Elementary | PreK-5 | 100 | 125 | 225 | 44% |
| Fishburn Elementary | PreK-5 | 125 | 150 | 275 | 45% |
| Birmingham Middle School | 6-8 | 250 | 288 | 538 | 46% |
| Ballpark Middle School | 6-8 | 238 | 250 | 488 | 48% |
| Dennisfield High School | 9-12 | 100 | 650 | 750 | 13% |
| TOTAL | | 813* | 1463 | 2276 | |

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The funding formula is based on the <u>number of military dependent students at eligible school(s).</u>

| Total Military Dependent Students at Target School(s) | Award Amount (Total for 5 years) |
|---|---|
| | |
| 250 or fewer | $ 250,000.00 |
| 251 - 500 | $ 500,000.00 |
| 501 - 750 | $ 750,000.00 |
| 751 - 1000 | $ 1,000,000.00 |
| 1001 - 1250 | $ 1,250,000.00 |
| 1251 or greater | $ 1,500,000.00 |

*Based on the example, a school district with 813 military dependent students would be eligible to receive a grant award of $1,000,000.00

Current DoDEA grant recipients are eligible to apply for a grant.

Applicants that have never received a DoDEA grant will receive five (5) additional points on its evaluation (see Evaluation Criteria section for more information),

All grants will have a project period ending date of August 31, 2020.

The first year of the grant (2015-2016) is required to be used as a Planning Year.

## FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

**Cost sharing:** Cost sharing/matching funds are not required in this program.

**Indirect costs:** <u>No grant funds may be allocated to administrative or indirect costs.</u> Indirect costs are those incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.

**Personnel:** Up to 25 percent of Federal funds may be allocated to full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. However, proposed budgets that exceed 25 percent for FTE personnel may be considered. The term, *full-time equivalent* (FTE), usually refers to fully benefited positions. For grant purposes, the funding category, *Personnel,* includes FTE and non-FTE positions /costs. Examples of non-FTE personnel costs include stipends for teachers, wages to afterschool tutors, and costs for substitute teachers. FTE and non-FTE positions must be clearly delineated on the detailed budget (Appendix C).

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**Food and beverage:** Food and beverage costs, with the exception of subsistence costs associated with authorized travel, are not allowable in this program.

**Fringe benefits:** Although fringe benefits for grant-funded FTE positions are an allowable cost, no grants funds may be allocated for administrative or indirect costs. Fringe Benefits are defined as costs in the form of employer contributions or expenses for social security; employee life, health, unemployment, and worker's compensation insurance, and other similar benefits for employees expected to work solely on this grant.

**Equipment:** Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non–Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000.

**Evaluation:** DoDEA requires that at least three percent of grant funds will be spent on a third-party evaluator. The third-party evaluator may not be a current employee of the LEA.

**Grant meeting:** In the Year 1 budget, LEAs must include $4,500 for the project director, the third-party evaluator, and another staff member integral to the day-to-day work of the project to attend a two-day meeting, which is expected to occur in October 2015. Grantees may budget additional funds up to $2500 to attend DoDEA regional or topical grantee meetings throughout the grant cycle. Any funds not expended for the meetings may be realigned for other grant expenditures.

## D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### APPLICATION PACKAGE

The application package and required documents is available for download at the Grants.gov website: www.grants.gov. Applicants may also request an application package from DoDEA by electronic mail at grants@hq.dodea.edu. All applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov.

**Technical assistance:** In an effort to assist applicants with developing high-quality proposals, DoDEA has scheduled an <u>optional</u> technical assistance webinar for LEAs. Applicants may participate in the webinar during one of the following dates and times. Following the webinar, a recording of the webinar and copies of corresponding materials will be available online at www.dodk12grants.org.

<u>**Tuesday, March 10, 2015**</u> **at 12:00 PM ET**

Meeting Name:  DoDEA Grant Application Webinar 3/10/15
When:  03/10/2015 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
Time Zone:  (GMT-05:00) Eastern Time

To join the meeting:
http://meetingconnect.adobeconnect.com/r3svo47lz2i/


Audio Conference Details:
Conference Number: (877) 226-9607
Conference Code: 9790239915
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If you have never before attended an Adobe Connect meeting:

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http://meetingconnect.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm
Get a quick overview: http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html

<u>**Wednesday, March 11, 2015**</u> **at 3:00 PM ET**

Meeting Name:  DoDEA Grant Application Webinar 3/11/15
When:  03/11/2015 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Time Zone:  (GMT-05:00) Eastern Time

To join the meeting:
http://meetingconnect.adobeconnect.com/r7ukewpnhh3/

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Audio Conference Details:
Conference Number: (877) 226-9607
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Get a quick overview: http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html


## REQUIRED APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Applications must include the following required components. Only one application per LEA will be accepted.  Items 1-4 listed below should be submitted as one comprehensive document.

1.  **Cover page:** Cover page must include contact information, names of military installations served, focus areas, enrollment data, and authorized signature. (See Appendix B)

2.  **Abstracts:** Both a 50-word and a 200-word abstract are required. Abstracts must provide a clear overview of the project's purpose, design, and goals. Both abstracts may be placed on the same page in the application.

3.  **Table of Contents:** Proposals should include an accurate Table of Contents.

4.  **Project Narrative:** The project narrative must not exceed 20 pages (excluding supporting documents and appendices) and should address all sub-sections (A-F). See SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS for formatting guidelines.

**Supporting documents:** Supporting documents should include needs assessment data, résumés of key personnel, and bibliography.  Memorandums of understanding/agreement may be included.

**SF 424:** Standard Form 424 – Application for Federal Assistance is required.

**SF 424A:** Standard Form 424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs is required. All sections on this form must be completed. Totals should match the detailed budget.

**Budget Table:** Proposals must include a detailed budget. This document must clearly explain all grant expenditures in order to determine the allowability, allocability, and reasonableness of costs. (See Appendix C)

**SF 424B:** Standard Form 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs is required.

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**Certifications:** Applicants must complete the Certification Regarding Lobbying form and the Certification regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters (www.grants.gov).

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applications are due **Tuesday, May 5, 2015** by 11:59 PM (Eastern Time). All applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov by the deadline. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

The following standards should be followed:

- A page is 8.5" x 11", one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Single space all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a 12-point font; titles may be larger; charts may use a 10-point font.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) may not be accepted.

Please visit www.grants.gov as soon as possible to review the submission procedures and helpful hints to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted without errors. DoDEA staff cannot provide technical assistance on the use of Grants.gov.

1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration may take five or more business days to complete. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the Registration steps are complete.

2) **SUBMIT EARLY – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded.** The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully before 11:59:00 p.m. EST on the deadline date.

**For complete instructions on how to register and use Grants.gov, visit: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html. DoDEA staff cannot provide technical assistance on the use of Grants.gov.**

**Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**:

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

## E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Project Narrative may not exceed 20 pages in length. The Project Narrative describes, in sufficient detail, how the project will be implemented and includes the Evaluation Criteria in Sections I-VI below. The application will be reviewed and scored according to the quality of the responses to the requirements in Sections I-VI. The Project Narrative—with all sections included—may be no longer than 20 pages.

### Section I: Overview Materials (Materials in this section are required but not scored]

The purpose of this section is to provide needed information on your district, schools, and military dependent students.

**Cover page:**
Cover page must include contact information, names of military installations served, focus areas, enrollment data for district and participating schools, and authorized signature (See Appendix B for a template).

**Abstracts:**
Both a 50-word and a 200-word abstract are required. Abstracts must provide a clear overview of the project's purpose, design, and goals.

**Table of Contents:**
Proposals should include an accurate Table of Contents.

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## Section II: Needs Assessment (15 points total)

The purpose of this section is to justify the need for the proposed project. It should demonstrate the extent of need through existing military dependent student data, and should relate data on the factors underlying the need to the project's focus and the professional development plan (formative assessments, surveys of staff capacities, review of existing infrastructure, etc.). Applicants should demonstrate that they have the capacity to track and disaggregate results for the military dependent population.

**States the need and uses data to support it (4 points)**
- Includes data on student achievement (state, LEA and/or project schools) for all students and military dependent; and/or data on military dependent student need for social-emotional support. These data would be used to establish the project's baseline.
- Relates needs directly to program areas (For example: achievement scores and current classroom practice, student behavioral measures and current support resources).
- Relates needs directly to data on population addressed by the project (For example: grade level, special education, transitioning students).

**Presents Multiple Data comparisons (4 points)**
- Demonstrates the ability to disaggregate military dependent student data and evaluate differences between populations for the project focus areas (For example: military vs. non-military or military students in special education vs. those in general education).
- Uses multiple data sources to evaluate fit of project components to needs (formative data, surveys, previous studies).
- Presents other data (e.g., increased deployment at military installation, budget cuts) and other comparisons (e.g., project schools to LEA average, LEA to state) to support need.

**Discusses relationship of needs to past efforts (including DoDEA projects if applicable) (3 points)**
- Presents data demonstrating how current needs reflect success or challenges of previous efforts (including DoDEA projects) For example, did needs change/gaps close, how does this project apply to different areas of need/address continuing gaps.
- Explains how successes or lessons learned from past efforts (including DoDEA projects) will be incorporated in planning for the new project.

**Includes review of Professional Development needs (4 points)**
- Includes relevant information on how or why items such as current levels of professional development, planning time, contract hours, Professional Learning Community (PLC) support to analyze data, etc. are not adequate to meet student needs.

## Section III:  Project Goals (5 points total)

This section should take the form of an outline of the goals and strategies that underlie the project. It must represent a clear model of how improvement will be measured and describe in a few lines each strategy listed.

Applicants are permitted to include up to three goals. Goals may be either academic or support focused. Applicants are permitted to include up to three strategies per goal, but strategies must fall into the prescribed direct service categories outlined below.

The narrative for this section must have:

**Goals aligned with the needs identified and focused on military dependent student outcomes (1 point).**

- Proposed goals must relate to the needs data presented.
- Project has no more than 3 goals.
- Goals must align with grant focus areas: improvement in military dependent student achievement or expansion of support services to this population.

**Specific, measureable and reasonable outcomes for each goal based on the activities planned (3 points).**

- Each goal has one outcome that demonstrates **growth over time** as compared to some baseline or reference group.
- Outcomes are specific (defining measurements and targets for evaluating success). Achievement outcomes reference changes in scores on normed assessments or standard measures such as graduation rates. Outcomes for social/emotional goals reference changes in the number of students served.
- Outcomes targets are reasonable based on the information available.  They reference the military dependent student data available and rely on multiple comparisons or trends over more than one year.

Do not set outcome targets that maintain status quo. Outcomes can target subgroups of military dependent youth such as students with disabilities or English language learners. When the stability of state assessments are in doubt for the grant period, use growth scores on formative assessments or changes in performance relative to other groups, rather than overall achievement scores to measure outcomes.

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**Strategies used must include direct services to military dependent students, represent a coherent approach to the goal, and be sufficient to affect the outcomes proposed (1 point)**

- Each goal may have up to three broad strategies.
- Each strategy must fall into one of the categories outlined below.
- Descriptions of the strategies should reference major activities associated with them for example: professional development required to implement or equipment that will be purchased.

Strategies must be based on providing direct services to military dependent students.  Introducing or aligning new curriculum school-wide **does not** represent direct services. Acceptable strategy categories are defined for each type of goal and are listed below. Select the category and describe the strategy you are implementing. Strategies must have benchmark measures to use in the evaluation process. The use of strategies not listed in this application will not be funded under this grant.

**Academic _goal_ examples:**
- Improve academic achievement of military dependent students in math and science.
- Improve academic achievement of military dependent SWDs in English Language Arts.
- Improve academic outcomes of military dependent high school students.

**Academic _outcome_ examples:**
- The percentage of military dependent students in 3$^{rd}$-5$^{th}$ grade meeting proficiency on [X] state math assessments will increase by x percentage points over the baseline year.
- The average of growth scores from fall to spring among military dependent SWDs on the [Y] formative assessment will meet or exceed growth scores for non-military SWDs.
- The percentage of military dependent high school students at each grade (9-12) who have earned the required number of credits toward graduation will increase to 90% by June 2020.

**Permitted _strategy categories_ for academic goals (select up to 3):**
- Tutoring – such as afterschool tutoring programs, summer intensives
- In-class supports – such as Response to Intervention, AVID
- Extra-curricular activities – such as STEM Days, Robotics/Lego clubs
- Virtual learning – such as online classes, flipped classrooms

**Social/Emotional Support _goal_:**
Increase the level of social and emotional supports for military dependent students

**Social/emotional _outcome_ examples (all should be based on increasing proportion of students whose needs are met):**
- The percentage of military dependent students referred for behavioral issues will decrease to 10%.

- The percentage of military dependent students participating in peer support programs for one full year will increase to 50%.
- The percentage of military dependent high school students whose parents attend at least one college awareness program and who complete at least one SAT/ACT administration will increase by x percentage points each year.

**Permitted *strategy categories* for support goals (select up to 3):**
- Counseling – such as individual/group counseling sessions with military specialist
- Peer support/Mentoring – such as Student2Student program, new student buddies
- Parent/Community engagement – such as college awareness programs, math nights
- Behavior management programs – such as Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), Mindfulness

## Section IV: Project Plan and Leadership Roles (30 points total)

Complete this section to provide information about two of the project leaders (project director and outside evaluator) and the role of the project director in planning and implementing the project and managing the necessary professional development to implement the project strategies with fidelity.

**Presents Criteria for the Project Director (8 points)**
Write a brief statement about how your project director will:
- Command authority to direct the project
- Offer fair and productive supervision for project staff that leads to improved performance
- Rely on formal and informal networks to solve problems quickly and effectively
- Set, monitor, and re-evaluate project priorities frequently
- Engage with the outside evaluator to facilitate the formative and summative evaluation activities
- Provide continual and effective communication to all participants, including DoDEA, about the project purpose and implementation progress
- Provide the estimated time commitment for the project director (Note that this is _required_ to be between 50 – 100% FTE).
- Append a resume of no longer than 2 pages in length for the project director. If the project director is not yet known provide a description of the criteria that you will use to advertise the position.

Note: Changes in the Project Director must receive prior written approval of the Federal awarding agency.

**Summarizes the Project Director's role in the following scenarios:**

Write a brief statement about how the project director will perform the tasks for each of the 3 following scenarios:

- **Overall approach in the planning year including (5 points)**
  - Setting criteria for project positions and expectations for roles and responsibilities
  - Hiring new or revising existing staff positions
  - Establishing planning year agenda and milestones
    - Determining key strategy activities and their implementation timeline
    - Determining key data collection tools, activities, and timeline that will "tell the story" of the project's impact
    - Determining key communication tools, activities, and timeline
  - Establishing a collaborative climate among project staff and community stakeholders
  - Establishing problem-solving procedures
- **Overall approach to project implementation including (4 points)**
  - Maintaining a collaborative climate among project staff and community stakeholders
  - Implementing plan as developed during planning year.
  - Collaborating with the outside evaluator
  - Implementing problem-solving procedures
- **Overall approach to implement professional development including (3 points)**
  - Determining and maintaining appropriate types of professional development (job-embedded coaching, demonstration classroom, Coach-supported PLCs, ongoing sessions from experts)
  - Determining and maintaining criteria to determine in-house experts and outside vendors for delivering professional development
  - Establishing and maintaining evaluation tools and activities to determine the effectiveness of the different types of professional development on changing educator practice

**Presents Criteria for the Outside Evaluator (7 points)**

Write a brief statement demonstrating how the outside evaluator:

- Understands qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and analyses
- Understands education, school, and district contexts
- Has experience in evaluating direct service projects supported by a set of activities and resources to achieve a specific intended result
- Has experience in evaluating project implementation fidelity to capture data on whether the activities are put in place as intended
- Has experience in evaluating project processes measures to capture formative data useful to monitor and revise activities as needed

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- Has experience in evaluating project summative measures to capture formative data useful to determine if the specific intended result was achieved
- Uses a collaborative approach to work with project staff
- Append a resume of no longer than 2 pages in length for the outside evaluator. *If the outside evaluator is not yet known, provide a description of the criteria that you will use to advertise the position.*

**Summarizes the Evaluator's role in the following scenarios:**
Write a brief statement about how the evaluator and the project director will perform the tasks for each of the 3 following scenarios:

- **Overall Approach to Evaluation Responsibilities (3 points)**
  - Collect data and/or train others to collect data (e.g. using rubrics or observation)for this project.
  - Analysis or comparisons with the summative data provided (e.g. disaggregate military student achievement by grade and by school).
  - Analyze process data to provide actionable information for improving implementation (e.g. compare student subgroup outcomes based on differences in classroom implementation).

## Section V:    Project Evaluation (30 points total)

Complete the following matrix with information on how you will collect and evaluate data to monitor the implementation of your strategies and progress toward your goal. There are three sections to complete. The fidelity and process evaluation sections must (1) pose questions that the evaluation will answer, (2) describe the evaluation approach, (3) name the data collection instruments (protocols, surveys, or tests) that will be deployed, (4) indicate benchmarks that will determine how the evaluation question is answered, and (5) indicate the collection schedule for each tool. Data collection instruments should include standardized forms (such as validated surveys and assessment protocols) wherever possible. The summative evaluation section must include indicators to determine your progress towards your goal outcomes each year of the project and ultimately the success or failure of your project.

**Fidelity (10 points)**
The purpose of the *fidelity* evaluation is to assess whether project activities are completed as planned (e.g. to what extent were PD sessions attended; was all equipment purchased and installed on schedule).

- Evaluation activities must address all major strategy components.
- The data collection instruments, activities, and schedule should be appropriate to answer the identified evaluation questions.

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**Process (10 points)**

The purpose of the *process* evaluation is to assess progress of strategies and provide actionable information on areas of implementation that need improvement (e.g. did classroom instruction/lesson plans change based on PD; were parents satisfied with counseling services provided). Note that all strategies must directly serve military dependent students, thus a question on proportion of students served is pre-populated in the sample matrix below.

- Evaluation activities should be sufficient to assess whether all strategies are making progress over time.
- The data collection instruments, activities, and schedule must be appropriate to answer the identified evaluation questions.

**Summative (10 points)**

The purpose of the *summative* evaluation is to assess the impact of the project on military dependent student outcomes

- The summative evaluation includes how progress toward the outcome target will be assessed in each year of the project.
- Outcomes specify military dependent student data will be disaggregated unless military dependent enrollment is greater than 80% of the total student enrollment. Note that all data must be tracked and evaluated for the military dependent population separately (if less than 80% of the total), regardless of whether overall student performance is also evaluated
- Summative evaluation references baselines or comparison groups that will be used to measure extent of impact. For example: "increase over baseline…" or "as compared to non-military dependent…"

The template for each section is provided below. **The prepopulated questions in the matrix below are** *required* **for all applicants.** Applicants should include additional evaluation questions as relevant to their project. Answers to the required questions will be part of the regular reporting periods. If you have more than one project goal, you will complete the 3-part template once for each goal.

Detailed examples will be provided during the application webinars on March 10 and 11, 2015. If you cannot attend the webinars, copies of this information and the webinar recordings will be posted to www.dodk12grants.org.

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**Evaluation Matrix Template 1: Goals focused on improving <u>academic outcomes</u> for military dependent students:**

| Goal 1, 2, or 3 [specify]: Improve academic outcomes [in area] of military dependent students [subgroup] |
| --- |
| **Strategy 1: [specify]** |
| **Strategy 2:[specify]** |
| **Strategy 3:[specify]** |

| **Fidelity of Strategy Implementation** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Evaluation Question(s) | Evaluation Activities | Data Collection Instruments | Benchmark indicators | Data Collection Schedule |
| Strategy 1<br><br>1. Has the strategy been implemented according to plan? | | | | |
| Strategy 2<br><br>1. Has the strategy been implemented according to plan? | | | | |
| Strategy 3<br><br>1. Has the strategy been implemented according to plan? | | | | |

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| | Process Monitoring of Ongoing Implementation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluation Question(s) | Evaluation Activities | Data Collection Instruments | Benchmark indicators | Data Collection Schedule |
| Strategy 1<br><br>1. What proportion of eligible military students are being served?<br>2. Did delivery of the service improve? | | | | |
| Strategy 2<br><br>1. What proportion of eligible military students are being served?<br>2. Did delivery of the service improve? | | | | |
| Strategy 3<br><br>1. What proportion of eligible military students are being served?<br>2. Did delivery of the service improve? | | | | |
| **Annual Summative Measures**<br><br>**Final Academic Outcome Target:** | | | | |
| Goal 1 | Specify instrument, comparisons, target in question | | | |

| Interim indicators | |
|---|---|
| 1. Planning year (June 2016): | |
| 2. June 2017: | |
| 3. June 2018: | |
| 4. June 2019: | |
| 5. June 2020: | |

**Evaluation Matrix Template 2: Goals focused on increasing <u>social-emotional support</u> to military dependent students:**

| Goal 1,2,or 3 [specify]:Increase the level of social-emotional supports for military dependent students [subgroup] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategy 1: [specify]** | | | | |
| **Strategy 2: [specify]** | | | | |
| **Strategy 3: [specify]** | | | | |
| **Fidelity of Strategy Implementation** | | | | |
| Evaluation Question(s) | Evaluation Activities | Data Collection Instruments | Benchmark indicators | Data Collection Schedule |
| Strategy 1<br><br>1. Has the strategy been implemented according to plan? | | | | |
| Strategy 2<br><br>1. Has the strategy been implemented according to plan? | | | | |

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| Strategy 3<br><br>1. Has the strategy been implemented according to plan? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Process Monitoring of Ongoing Implementation** | | | | |
| Evaluation Question(s) | Evaluation Activities | Data Collection Instruments | Benchmark indicators | Data Collection Schedule |
| Strategy 1<br><br>1. Did outreach/ availability of services increase?<br>2. Did service delivery improve? | | | | |
| Strategy 2<br><br>1. Did outreach/ availability of services increase?<br>2. Did service delivery improve? | | | | |
| Strategy 3<br><br>1. Did outreach/ availability of services increase?<br>2. Did service delivery improve? | | | | |

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| Annual Summative Measures<br><br>**Support Outcome Target: The percentage of military students who [measure] will increase/decrease [target]** | |
|---|---|
| Goal 2<br><br>Interim indicators | Specify what group will be tracked, what is comparison, what is target in question |
| 1. Planning year (June 2016): | |
| 2. June 2017: | |
| 3. June 2018: | |
| 4. June 2019: | |
| 5. June 2020: | |

## Section VI: Budget Narrative and Sustainability (15 points total)

*Note:* Grant funds must be used for programs that directly support the student, and cannot be used for programs that only support family/community members.

**Clear Overview (9 points)**
- The budget narrative should give a clear overview and justification of where grant dollars (and matching funds, if any) are allocated.
- Describe existing resources and other support the LEA expects to receive for the proposed project. This may include any resources or support (monetary or in-kind) received from community partners. Please include a letter of support from your community partner (if applicable) in the Appendix indicating the resources and/or support given as part of this project.
- Identify how project leaders will track budget expenditures.
- List the position and FTE for each person and ensure that they seem reasonable given the amount of work to be done.
- Estimates are reasonable for implementing and maintaining strategies, action items, and materials.

**Sustainability (6 points)**
- Describe how project data will inform your sustainability plan.
- Describe how professional development and community partnerships will be included as part of sustainability planning.
- A pertinent letter of support could be appended.

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**Note:**

For budgeting purposes, the grant years are:

       Year 1: Award Date – August 31, 2016

       Year 2: September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017

       Year 3: September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018

       Year 4: September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2019

       Year 5: September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020

## REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

MCASP applications are peer reviewed according to the evaluation criteria listed above. Applications may receive a maximum score of 100 points.

| Narrative *(20-page maximum)* | Points |
|---|---|
|   A.  Overview Materials | (not scored) |
|   B.  Needs Assessment | 15 |
|   C.  Project Goals | 5 |
|   D.  Project Plan and Leadership Roles | 30 |
|   E.  Project Evaluation | 30 |
|   F.  Budget Table Narrative and Sustainability | 15 |
| **Competitive Preference Priority:** New Applicants | 5 |
| **Total** | **100** |

Decisions to fund a grant are based on:

- Strengths and weaknesses of the application as identified by peer reviewers

- Availability of funds

- Equitable distribution of awards in terms of geography, Branches of Service, repeat awardees, or other factors.

## F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### 1. Federal Award Notices:

Successful applicants will receive notification of their grant award via email, on or about July 31, 2015.  The Federal award, signed by the DoDEA Grants Officer is the authorizing document for grant activities.  The Federal award notification will be sent via email to the points of contact listed on the cover page of the application.

### 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Grant awards will be governed by the guidance in 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," as modified and supplemented by the Department of Defense's (DoD) interim implementation found at 2 CFR part 1103, "Interim Grants and Cooperative Agreements Implementation of Guidance in 2 CFR part 200" (79 FR 76047, December 19, 2014), all of which will be incorporated by reference.

Provisions of Chapter I, Subchapter C of Title 32, CFR, "DoD Grant and Agreement Regulations," other than parts 32 and 33, continue to be in effect and will be incorporated by reference, with applicability as stated in those provisions.

By submission of its proposal or application, the applicant represents that it does not require any of its employees, contractors, or subrecipients seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting those employees, contractors, or subrecipients from lawfully reporting that waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information. Note that: (1) the basis for this representation is a prohibition in section 743 of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2015 (Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, Pub. L. 113-235) on provision of funds through grants and cooperative agreements to entities with certain internal confidentiality agreements or statements; and (2) section 743 states that it does not contravene requirements applicable to Standard Form 312, Form 4414, or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

Additional information regarding award terms and conditions will be provided shortly in a separate document.

## 3. Reporting:

Grant recipients are required to submit financial and performance reports on a semester basis and a summative evaluation report annually. Further guidance will be provided to grantees once awards are made.

## G. AGENCY CONTACTS

DoDEA Grant Program Office
Educational Partnership
Department of Defense Education Activity
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350
(571) 372-6026
grants@hq.dodea.edu

# APPENDIX A
## Mentorship Opportunity

If you are interested in collaborating with another grantee district via a mentorship relationship, please include one of the two following statements on your application cover sheet (Appendix B).

☐ My district is willing to **serve as a mentor** to another grantee. We meet the requirements, as outlined.

☐ My district would like to **request a mentor**.

Since the DoDEA Partnership grants began in 2008, there have been more than 250 grant projects. There is now a great deal of grantee expertise in meeting the academic, social emotional, and professional development needs associated with educating military dependent youth. In order to leverage that expertise and build collaborations across districts with similar populations or project strategies, DoDEA would like to encourage mentor relationships.

If you are a **new** applicant and would like to request a mentor, please check the corresponding box above. As a mentee, you will be expected to do the following:

- Travel to the post-award meeting and stay for an additional day to discuss mentorship requirements.

- Participate in up to two mentor webinars over the course of each school year.

- Travel to and meet with your mentor at least twice a year. Please complete a separate budget narrative, and include it as Appendix A with your application.

If you would like to **serve as a mentor**, please read the following requirements and check the corresponding box above if you meet ALL of them:

- Completed a full DoDEA grant cycle (i.e. you must have received a grant in 2009, 2010, 2011, or 2012).

- Demonstrate that you met or exceeded at least one project goal.

- Travel to the post-award meeting and stay for an additional day to discuss mentorship requirements.

- Participate in up to two mentor webinars over the course of each school year.

- Travel to and meet with your mentee at least twice a year. Please complete a separate budget narrative, and include it as Appendix A with your application.

# Appendix B
# Sample Cover Sheet

**Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)**
**Military-Connected Academic and Support Programs (MCASP)**
**Full Application 2015**

[**district name**]

[project name**]

[district address]

| **Project Director** | **Alternative Point of Contact** |
|---|---|
| Name: | Name: |
| Title: | Title: |
| Tel: | Tel: |
| Email: | Email: |

Unique Entity Identifier:
Total Funds Requested:
Military Installations Served: Name(s):
Grant Grade Levels and Focus Area(s):

| Target Schools | Grades | Enrollment, SY 14 - 15 | | | Percent Military |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Military** | **Non-Military** | **Total** | |
| Name1 | | | | | |
| Name2 | | | | | |
| Name3 | | | | | |
| Name… | | | | | |
| Total Grant proposal | | | | | |

☐ My district is willing to **serve as a mentor** to another grantee. We meet the requirements, as outlined.

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## Appendix C
## SAMPLE Budget Table

| LEA: Sunshine Public School District | | | Project Title: Career Readiness through STEM | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Detailed Budget** | | | | |
| **Total Amount of Federal Funds Requested: 1,000,000.00** | | | | |
| **Budget Categories** | **Description** | **Federal Amount Requested** | **Percent of Federal Total** | **Non-Federal Funds** |
| Year 1: Date of Award - August 31, 2016 | | | | |
| Personnel | | | | |
| * Project Coordinator | 0.5 FTE to oversee project implementation | $20,000.00 | 2% | $ 10,000.00 |
| * STEM Coach | 0.5 FTE to provide teacher training and coaching | $20,000.00 | 2% | $ 10,000.00 |
| Personnel Total | | $40,000.00 | 4% | $20,000.00 |
| Fringe Benefits | | | | |
| Project Coordinator/STEM Coach | Social Security, Health Benefits | $2,500.00 | 0.25% | |
| STEM Coach | Social Security, Health Benefits | $2,500.00 | 0.25% | |
| Fringe Benefits Total | | $5,000.00 | 0.50% | |
| Travel | | | | |
| * Post Award Meeting | Travel to Post Award Meeting (Project Director, STEM Coach, External Evaluator) | $4,500.00 | 0.45% | |
| * Travel for Professional Development | 4 Teachers attending a regional summit on STEM technologies | $23,000.00 | 2.30% | $ 5,000.00 |
| Travel Total | | $27,500.00 | 2.80% | $5,000.00 |
| Equipment (refer to definition) | (any single item that costs $5,000 or more) | | | |
| * | | $0.00 | | |
| Equipment Total | | $0.00 | | |
| Supplies | | | | |
| Science Implementation | Middle School Robotics Robotics Kits ($4000.00 X 3=$12,000.00) | $12,000.00 | 1.20% | $ 10,000.00 |
| Math Implementation | Tablets for Mobile Math Implementation (6 sets of 12 tablets ) $2000.00 per set | $12,000.00 | 1.20% | $ 10,000.00 |
| Supplies Total | | $24,000.00 | 2.40% | $20,000.00 |
| Contractual | | | | |
| * External Evaluator | ABC University | $6,000.00 | 0.60% | |
| * Professional Development | STEM Consultant for 40 hours per school year | $25,000.00 | 2.50% | $ 15,000.00 |
| Contractual Total | | $31,000.00 | 2.56% | $15,000.00 |
| Other | | | | |
| * | | | | |
| Other Total | | $0.00 | | |
| Year 1: Total | | $127,500.00 | 12.75% | $60,000.00 |

Applicants may add as many subcategories as necessary.   Include costs for all five grant years.  Amounts must match SF 424A—Budget for Non-Construction Programs.

Applicants must complete the breakdown for each grant year using the example above. The example only represents Year 1.  Application must include Years 2, 3 4, and 5.

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# Appendix D
# Common Challenges

Please read these questions before submitting your application to avoid common mistakes.

1) **Why should I budget all this time for a project director?** If you are assigning this as just an extra duty to a school principal or superintendent, it demonstrates that you have underestimated the role this individual needs to play in the project. The role of the Project Director includes: information dissemination, consensus building, monitoring implementation, coordinating data collection and evaluation activities and reviewing incoming information as well as completing general reporting requirements and overseeing budgets. Unless you have a single school and a simple strategy, this takes time and we estimate at least .5 FTE for a typical multi-school project.

2) **What am I supposed to do in the planning year?** We have seen a tendency in previous grant cycles for grantees to wait until after the grant is awarded to distribute information to stakeholders and collectively plan grant implementation. This is too late as often the school year has begun and schedules are set. To avoid this, each grant will have a mandatory planning year. Grantees should schedule activities during this period to: build buy-in among staff and administration through introductory professional development and sharing of baseline data; create job descriptions for new staff and requirement lists for outside providers; get approvals for hires and material purchases; bring networks and infrastructure up to capacity for new technology; hire new staff and purchase materials; and have evaluators work with district personnel to ensure data collection methods and schedules are mutually understood.

3) **Why should I consider working with an outside evaluator before the grant is awarded?** We've seen numerous slowdowns and mistakes in previous projects' evaluation plans either because the role of the evaluator is not well defined or evaluation needs are not considered in the design of the project. To avoid this, we suggest that:
   a. Your evaluator is impartial, qualified and has experience in evaluating system change in schools. Grant administration experience is not equivalent to evaluation experience and neither is classroom experience. Funded projects will require both quantitative and qualitative analysis that generally includes knowledge of statistical methods, focus group or observational techniques, and triangulation of evidence from multiple sources.
   b. You might consider consulting with the evaluator in the design of the evaluation plan during the application period. Some evaluators may be willing to help design your grant's evaluation plan during the application phase subject to a conditional agreement that they would be hired if the grant is funded. If you incur costs associated with an evaluator before you receive a grant award, you will be

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responsible for paying such costs and the Government will not reimburse you for such costs in the event that you do not receive a grant award.

   c. If selected to receive an award, and once an evaluator is hired, you must ensure the evaluator has access to the required data, which includes fidelity and process data. You must work with them to clear administrative and other hurdles to gain access to the data. It is not simply a question of waiting for summative test scores to be sent for summary analysis. Evaluators will most likely participate in observations or will need to train those who will collect observational data. They need access to baseline and comparative information for quantitative data analysis. They need to be **in** the schools to learn local and district processes in order to effectively evaluate qualitative data.

4) **How do I know that my goals and outcomes work with the program requirements?** Your outcomes must focus on impacts on military dependent students. This means:

   a. Summative outcomes for academic goals must be based on student achievement measures (test scores, credits earned etc.);

   b. Summative outcomes for support goals must be based on student participation or behavioral measures (number of counselor visits, number of detentions);

   c. You must be able to track military dependent students separately on both outcome measures and key process measures (such as completing tutoring units or participating in counseling sessions).

5) **How do I make sure that my goals, strategies and outcomes are aligned?** In some previous applications, we have seen goals based on one group of students while strategies focus on another, or outcomes that do not measure the same constructs as the original need assessment. Aligning the goals, strategies and outcomes during the application process will not only gain higher ratings for your application but also will make your project easier to implement and evaluate. Some examples that we've seen of things to avoid are:

- The goal is to improve all military student achievement scores but the strategies impact a very small number of students (tutoring for lowest quartile and only through an afterschool program that not all can attend);
- The goal is to close gaps between military student performance and state averages on assessments, but the military student subgroup baseline already exceeds the state average; and,
- The goal was based on military student behavioral issues but the outcome is parent satisfaction with school.

6) **How do I construct baseline measures and targets that will be achievable and realistic?** This is a common issue and can be the result of several different factors:

   a. If you are thinking about year-to-year, small percentage point fluctuations as representing significant change, and setting targets based on some arbitrary increase, you will most likely not meet your goal outcomes. Instead, look at multi-year trends or averages to establish realistic baselines and targets.

b. If you don't take turnover into consideration you may have too few students for valid pre-post measures. Also remember that, as populations fluctuate, you need percentage of students served, not counts of students served, as targets.

c. If you are relying on state assessments while curriculum and standards are in flux you may not be able to evaluate outcomes. State fluctuations can't always be predicted, but they can be mitigated if you have comparison group data or growth scores to use in outcome analysis. You can look at your military dependent student population in comparison to district or state averages; growth changes from fall to spring on formative measures; or students in grant schools vs. those in non-grant schools if you plan ahead and establish baseline measures for these comparison groups as well as for your target population.

7) **Why do I need a process evaluation? Isn't looking at end-of-year scores enough?** The point of including a process evaluation is to give you information that can help improve implementation during the project. If you are providing PD on a given instructional practice, and you survey teachers on satisfaction with PD but then wait until student outcomes are measured to find out if the PD was sufficient, you don't have timely information and you probably don't have actionable information. You need data collected during the school year as to how well, or to what extent, teachers are able to use new processes or materials. This requires a rubric understood by all parties (let teachers know what you want them or the students to be doing and how often) and observations, lesson plan reviews, counts of units completed, etc. to complete the rubrics.

8) **I think I want to develop my own survey. My project is unique. Why is this a bad idea?** You will not have time to develop, pilot, establish baselines and measure changes on new surveys. There are many available valid and reliable surveys to use on any given topic. Before selecting one, find out whether it is valid for measuring short-term changes among small groups of students or if it is designed to measure long-term, population-level trends. Please also remember to factor in turnover when you want to use pre/post surveys – particularly where completion rates will be low on the pretest (such as parent surveys), you may not have enough of a sample left for the posttest. Turnover also affects estimates of change based on repeated cross-sectional surveys - you may not have similar groups completing the surveys, especially if there is a long lag between the survey administrations.